

NAME AMANDA BOAZ

NEW LONDON, CT

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

FEBRUARY 17, 2017

H.B. 7027 AN ACT CONCENRING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM
ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR

RE: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, CONNECTICUTICORPS LINE ITEM

Distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Amanda Boaz and I am submitting testimony in support of restoring the cut of \$125,458 to the ConnectiCorps line item in the Department of Labor's budget.

I believe that Serve Here CT, which is funded through ConnectiCorps line item in question, is unique and greatly needed by young professionals in our state. Serve Here CT helps millennials find quality professional jobs, alleviate the burden of student debt and become committed to their communities.

Without Serve Here CT, I would not be where I am today.

Several years ago, after leaving my abusive husband, I found myself alone and struggling to provide for young son and myself. After receiving emergency assistance and support from Safe Futures, I began the long difficult journey of becoming financially stable. At one point I was working four different jobs. It was around that time that Safe Futures recommended that I apply to be a Serve Here CT Fellow.

As a Serve Here CT Fellow, I got a job at Safe Futures, the very organization that helped me most in my time of need.

Today, am able to afford my own apartment for the very first time, focus my energy on one full-time, long-term job and go back to school to earn my associates degree. Since last year I have been promoted and I expect to graduate with my associate's degree next year. After finishing my associate's degree, I plan to earn my bachelors degree.

Serve Here CT allowed for me to get the job even with less education and experience because I showed I was willing to learn, work hard, and I was passionate about my community. My entire life has changed because of the program.

I plan to stay in Connecticut permanently and invest in this community where I will raise my son.

I understand that budgets are tight and that cuts need to be made –but I urge you not to make Serve Here CT one of those cuts. This program helped me change my life. They empowered me as a woman and as a professional by giving me the support and resources to succeed.

What other program are there like Serve Here CT in Connecticut? I know of none. Serve Here CT is unique and so important. Please continue to fund this organization so that other millennials can have the same opportunities Serve Here CT gave me.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Amanda Boaz

2015/2016 Serve Here CT Fellow

Outreach Associate at Safe Futures in New London